



STATE SENATOR  
**BRUCE PATTERSON**  
IN THE LOOP ★

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Please forward to a friend!

## Legislative News

### **MBT surcharge phase-out approved by Michigan Senate**

During the first full week of session for the 95th Legislature, the Senate made a positive statement to job providers by making a phase-out of the business tax surcharge the first bill to be passed by the Michigan Senate.

Senate Bill 1 phases out the 22 percent surcharge on the Michigan Business Tax (MBT) over two years. The surcharge would be reduced to 11 percent for the tax year ending in 2009 and eliminated entirely the following year.

The elimination of the surcharge was the top recommendation of the Senate MBT Impact Assessment Subcommittee in 2008, after hearing testimony from business owners and taxpayers across the state.

SB 1 now heads to the House of Representatives for consideration.

### **Senate approves bill to stop jobs-killing rules**

The Michigan Senate recently approved a bill to prevent mandatory ergonomics standards from taking effect that would severely harm the viability of Michigan job providers.

Senate Bill 93, co-sponsored by Senator Patterson, would prohibit the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration from establishing burdensome mandatory ergonomic rules or standards. Voluntary guidelines would remain permissible but could be no more stringent than federal guidelines.

The cost of the state standards to job providers is expected to reach \$500 million or more. California is currently the only state in the nation to have mandatory ergonomics rules.

Voluntary standards by businesses have produced positive results. Michigan's repetitive stress injury rate decreased by nearly 40 percent since 1998 without mandated ergonomic standards - better than the nationwide drop of 32 percent during that time.

SB 93 now heads to the Michigan House for consideration.

### **Key transparency bills approved by state Senate**

The Senate recently approved three measures designed to ensure a more open government. The bills would help bring more accountability in state government and ensure legislative oversight.

Without compromising the important principle of taxpayer privacy and confidentiality, Senate Bill 70 would require the Michigan Department of Treasury to provide aggregate tax information to the chair of the Senate Finance Committee, the chair of the House Tax Policy Committee and the directors of the House and Senate fiscal agencies.

SB 71 would increase the Michigan Economic Growth Authority (MEGA) reporting requirements for MEGA tax credits by requiring the reports to include the actual number of jobs created and the actual value of the MEGA tax credits claimed by a business. SB 72 would require the Department of Treasury to post on its Web site certain information about tax credits.

Under the last two bills, Michigan taxpayers and job providers would have better access to how state funds are being spent and what tax credits are available.

All three transparency measures now head to the House for consideration.

## ***Around the District***

**March is American Red Cross Month.** Honor the good work of the Red Cross by donating blood. Listed below are local blood drives in the 7th Senate district. If you have any questions or would like to schedule an appointment please contact Southeast Michigan Red Cross at [www.semredcross.org](http://www.semredcross.org) or (313) 833-4440.

### **Red Cross Blood Drives March 2009 in 7th Senate District**

(Contact person listed at each site is for information only. Please call the Southeast Michigan Red Cross to make an appointment).

Sunday, March 1st 7:30am to 1:30pm  
First United Methodist Church  
777 W. 8 Mile Road  
**Northville**  
Janet (248) 349-6592

Tuesday, March 3rd 7:30am to 1:30pm  
Belleville High School  
501 W. Columbia  
**Belleville**  
Erin (734) 697-9133

Tuesday, March 3rd 1:00pm to 7:00pm  
Woodhaven Community Center  
23101 Hall Street  
**Woodhaven**  
Kathy (734) 675-4926

Friday, March 6th 11:00am to 5:00pm  
Plymouth Whalers  
14900 Beck Road  
**Plymouth**  
Natalie (734) 453-8400

Sunday, March 8th 9:00am to 3:00pm  
VFW Post 4012  
438 S. Main Street  
**Northville**  
Tom (248) 437-3171

Monday, March 9th 10:00am to 4:00pm  
Wayne County Community College - Washtenaw  
9555 Haggerty Road  
**Belleville**  
Diane (734) 697-5180

Monday, March 9th 1:00pm to 7:00pm  
First United Methodist Church of Plymouth  
45201 North Territorial  
**Plymouth**  
Karen (734) 453-5280

Friday, March 27th 10:00am to 4:00pm  
Plymouth Library  
223 S. Main Street  
**Plymouth**  
Barbara (734) 453-0750

Sunday, March 29th 8:00am to 2:00pm  
St. Kenneth Catholic Church  
14951 Haggerty Road  
**Plymouth**  
Sue (734) 420-3235

## *Useful Information*

### **UNEMPLOYMENT ISSUES**

If you are experiencing problems receiving your unemployment benefits, go to Senator Patterson's website [www.senatorbrucepatterson.com](http://www.senatorbrucepatterson.com) and click on the Unemployment Office banner. Fill out the form and Senator Patterson's office will contact you and assist you with your problem.

### **TAX GUIDES**

Free tax guides will be available to assist you with tax questions. The guide includes information for the 2008 year on property taxes, homestead property tax credits, farmland and open space tax relief, the home heating credit program, the Michigan Income Tax, the Single Business Tax, and other tax related subjects. The tax guides will be available the week of March 2nd at the following locations:

**Northville City Hall and Northville Township Hall**  
**Northville Public Library and Northville Senior Center**  
**Plymouth City Hall and Plymouth Township Hall**  
**Plymouth District Library**  
**Canton Township Hall, Canton Public Library**  
**Fred C. Fisher Library - Belleville**  
**Van Buren Township Hall**  
**Sumpter Township Hall**  
**Huron Township Hall**  
**Brownstown Township Hall**  
**Grosse Ile Township Hall**  
**Flat Rock Library**  
**Gibraltar City Hall**  
**Rockwood City Hall**  
**Trenton City Hall and Trenton Veterans Memorial Library**  
**Woodhaven City Hall**

### **HELP WITH PROPERTY TAX ASSESSMENT APPEAL**

By visiting Senator Bruce Patterson's website, you can learn how to effectively appeal your property tax assessment. The website is [www.senatorbrucepatterson.com](http://www.senatorbrucepatterson.com). The directions are easy to follow and there is even a sample appeal letter. Also, included is contact information on all of the Seventh Senate district assessors. The information is concise and easy to understand. There are also hard copies of this information available around the district. If you would like one mailed to you, please contact Senator Patterson's office by calling 1-(866) 262-7307 and pressing #1.

## ***District Events***

### **Seventh Senate District Office Hours**

Friday, March 20th  
11:00am to 1:00pm  
**Northville District Library**  
212 W. Cady  
Northville

Friday, April 3rd  
11:00am to 1:00pm  
**Fred C. Fischer Library**  
167 4th Street  
Belleville

Friday, April 24th  
1:00pm to 3:00pm  
**Canton Public Library**  
1200 S. Canton Center Road  
Canton

### **Contact Information**

Thank you for your interest in our current state issues. If you would like to receive future updates via email, please contact my office at [senbpatterson@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:senbpatterson@senate.michigan.gov) You can also visit me in my Lansing office at 505 Farnum Building, just across S. Capitol Avenue from the state Capitol; or you can send me mail at P. O. Box 30036, Lansing, MI 48909. Telephone (517) 373-7350 or (866) 262-7307; fax (517) 373-9228. I want to hear from you! Visit [www.senatorbrucepatterson.com](http://www.senatorbrucepatterson.com)

If you would like to not receive any future emails, simply reply to this message with the word "remove" in the body of the message. Thank you!